

Breastfeeding can be used as a method of contraception but only if you follow these rules:

- ✓ Your baby is under six months old.
- ✓ Your monthly periods have not returned.
- ✓ Your baby is fully or nearly fully breastfed.
- ✓ Your baby is breastfed at least every 4 hours during the day and at least every 6 hours at night.

If you answer “NO” to any of these statements, begin another method of contraception. Keep breastfeeding as often as you can for your baby’s health.

This method of contraception is called Lactational Amenorrhea Method.

L = Lactational means breastfeeding

A = Amenorrhea (no menstrual period)

M = Method

To use LAM effectively, you need additional information. For more information on LAM and other methods of contraception, call 1-800-660-5853.

Information Provided by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada, (SOGC) and the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine Clinical Protocol #13 -Contraception and Breastfeeding (Revised 2015)

Adapted with permission from Toronto Public Health and Ottawa Public Health

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Fully breastfed

means your baby gets all food from suckling at the breast.

Nearly fully breastfed

means, in addition to breastfeeding, vitamins, minerals, juice, water or any other foods are given infrequently (no more than one or two mouthfuls a week).

To be fully breastfed or nearly fully breastfed

your baby should go no more than four hours between breastfeeding during the day. At night, your baby should go no more than six hours between breastfeedings.



Breastfeeding & Contraception (Birth Control)

www.healthunit.org
1-800-660-5853



If you are breastfeeding and don't want to get pregnant, here are your options. Speak to your health care provider to choose a method that is right for you. Side effects are different for each method of birth control. Please note that for all hormonal methods there was no proven effect on infant from hormones. It is recommended to wait 6-8 weeks before taking progestin containing contraceptives and up to 6 months for combined hormonal contraception (estrogen and progestin). Effectiveness of each method varies upon use (T: Typical Use, P: Perfect Use). (SOGC)

Method of Contraception	Effect on breastfeeding	Effectiveness
Breastfeeding as Contraception, or LAM (Lactational Amenorrhea Method) Effective only if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your monthly periods have not returned. 2. Your baby is fully or nearly fully breastfed. 3. Your baby is less than 6 months old. 4. Your baby is breastfed at least every 4 hours during the day and at least every 6 hours at night. 	No effect on breastfeeding	98%
Condoms (Male) Thin covering of latex (or polyurethane) that is rolled onto the erect penis to stop sperm from going into the vagina.	No effect on breastfeeding	T = 85% P = 98%
Condoms (Female) Polyurethane sheath that lines the vagina to stop sperm from going into the vagina.	No effect on breastfeeding	T = 79% P = 95%
Spermicides (Foam, Gel, Film, Sponge) All contain chemicals that kill sperm. These methods are inserted into the vagina before intercourse.	No effect on breastfeeding	T = 68-71% P = 80-82%
IUD (Intra-Uterine Device) A small piece of plastic, usually wrapped with copper that is inserted into the uterus preventing the sperm from reaching the egg. An IUD is inserted by a health care provider.	No adverse effects on breastmilk supply if breastmilk supply is well established.	99.1%
IUS (Intra-Uterine System) A small piece of plastic containing a hormone (progestin), that thickens the cervical mucus, prevents sperm from reaching an egg and may stop an egg from being released. A health care provider inserts this into the uterus.	No adverse effects on breastmilk supply if breastmilk supply is well established.	99.8%
Fertility Awareness Methods These methods require special teaching and are difficult to use before your periods start again.	No effect on breastfeeding	T = 80% P = 91-99%
Combined hormonal contraceptive methods (Birth Control Pill, Contraceptive Patch, Vaginal Contraceptive Ring) Contain hormones (progestin and estrogen) that stop and egg from being released each month and thicken cervical mucus. These methods are taken orally (the "Pill"), worn on the skin (the "Patch") or inserted into the vagina (the "Ring").	Studies have shown that estrogen may reduce breastmilk supply.	T = 92% P = 99.7%
Mini Pill A pill containing progestin, which is a hormone that thickens cervical mucus and may stop an egg from being released.	No adverse effects on breastmilk supply if breastmilk supply is well established.	T = 92% P = 99.7%
Injectables (Depo Provera) A hormone injection given by a health care provider every three months. It contains progestin, which thickens cervical mucus and may stop ovulation.	Potential to impact milk supply if started in the early postpartum period and before milk supply is well established. If impact on supply is noted, this medication cannot be immediately discontinued.	T = 97% P = 99.7%
Vasectomy (Male Sterilization) A doctor cuts the tubes that carry sperm from the testicles. This may be done in a doctor's office. This is a permanent method.	No effect on breastfeeding	99.9%
Tubal Occlusion (Female Sterilization) A doctor cuts or blocks the tubes that carry the eggs to the uterus. This is done in a hospital and is a permanent method.	No effect on breastfeeding	99.5%
Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECP) You must take these pills as soon as possible and within 5 days (120 hours) of unprotected sex. ECP contains progestin. This is an emergency method.	May reduce breastmilk supply temporarily.	Effective varies ↓ over time.